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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT
(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference CO 167 PCT/Kr/C	FOR FURTHER ACTION		See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)
International application No. PCT/NL 03/00799	International filing date (day/month/year) 13.11.2003	Priority date (day/month/year) 15.11.2002	
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC H01M8/02			
Applicant CORUS TECHNOLOGY BV et al.			

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.
 - This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of sheets.
3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:
 - I Basis of the opinion
 - II Priority
 - III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
 - IV Lack of unity of invention
 - V Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
 - VI Certain documents cited
 - VII Certain defects in the international application
 - VIII Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 16.03.2004	Date of completion of this report 21.03.2005
Name and mailing address of the International preliminary examining authority: European Patent Office - P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk - Pays Bas Tel. +31 70 340 - 2040 Tx: 31 651 epo nl Fax: +31 70 340 - 3016	Authorized Officer Battistig, M Telephone No. +31 70 340-3738



**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/NL 03/00799

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **elements** of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17)*):

Description, Pages

1-7 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers

1-20 as originally filed

Drawings, Sheets

1/2-2/2 as originally filed

2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- contained in the international application in written form.
- filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- the description, pages:
- the claims, Nos.:
- the drawings, sheets:

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International application No. PCT/NL 03/00799

5. This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).
(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

see separate sheet

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-20
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	1-20
	No: Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-20
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/NL 03/00799

AD I. 6:

The document EP1413370 was not cited in the international search report.
A copy of the document is appended hereto.

For the purpose of drawing this Preliminary Examination report, the conflicting document EP1413370 (E category) has been taken into account. This document may have influence on novelty of the invention in certain designated states.

AD V:

1) Novelty:

A method of forming a separator plate starting from a metal plate including the step of being pressed onto a die having a number of recessed sections with the aid of pressurized fluid, or by the die being pressed onto the metal plate supported by pressurized fluid has not been disclosed in any document cited.

The subject-matter of claims 1 to 20 is novel.

2) Inventive step:

Document US2002/0086196 (D1), which is considered to represent the closest prior art, discloses a method of forming a separator by press forming a sheet of metal plate and a separator obtained by this process. The use of a pressurized fluid aid is not disclosed. It is not obvious for the skilled person starting from D1 to use a pressurized fluid in order to arrive at the invention, i.e. to obtain a plate having projecting sections of relatively great depth without damages that could be source of corrosion or defects of the material, and thus obtain a more uniform elongation of the material. In fact, the use of the pressurized fluid in separator plates manufacturing is neither suggested in the cited prior art, nor common knowledge.

The subject-matter of claims 1 to 20 does appear to involve an inventive step.